**Velasquez Chapter 1**

**Chapter Overview**

In chapter 1, students will encounter the basic principles of theoretical and applied ethical methodologies and approaches, and explore the contributions of a variety of philosophical thinkers. Through reading selections and exposure to specific ethical dilemmas, the learner will begin an investigation into the various elements of ethical reasoning, including the implications of ethical relativism. Through these materials and activities, students will embark on a journey of both introspection as well as social analysis, evaluating the various elements of what constitutes *moral choice*. In this introduction to ethical reasoning, learners will begin the process of using the tools of philosophy to determine moral outcomes in the business world.

**In-and-Out of Class Activities**

**Reflective Response**

1. Some theorists contend that the phrase *business ethics* creates an inherent contradiction. How would you explain the importance of adhering to ethical standards in the professional world while still maintaining the corporate and profit interests necessary to sustain businesses?

2. According to theorists such as Kant and Brandt, certain ideas of moral standards are universal and exist independently of authority or law. To what extent do you feel these transcendent ideas of morality should apply to the corporate world? Use specific examples to support your perspectives.

3. Summarize the main ideas of Kohlberg’s three levels of moral development. After evaluating the praise and criticisms of Kohlberg’s ideas, discuss your perspectives regarding the relevance, as well as potential shortcomings, of Kohlberg’s hierarchy of stages.

**Group & Team Collaboration**

1. Social psychology research contends that humans display anger in situations of perceived moral injustice. In the workplace, statistics reveal correlations between perceived inequity and lower productivity or morale. With your team, locate a specific example of a business whose practices negatively impacted employees. Each person in the team chooses a “job” in the company. Take turns discussing the specific ways the perceived injustice influenced each “employee’s” actions or opinions in the workplace.

2. Imagine your team has been asked to develop a business ethics training session for employees at a major corporation. Put together a presentation that covers the major elements of workplace morality your team feels would be most important for workers to understand.

3. In your teams, create a mock court case in which the principles of moral reasoning and responsibility you have read about in chapter one are your tools for defense and prosecution. Craft a specific scenario to put on trial. Divide teams into three, with near-equal participants for defense, prosecution, and jury. Your instructor will act as the judge in this case, awarding victory to the most convincing side.

**Intellectual Discussion**

1. **Lecture Point: Explicit vs. nonexplicit statements of moral reasoning**

**Questions to Ask Students: Describe the difference between explicit and nonexplicit statements of moral reasoning. What types of explicit and nonexplicit statements do we make about morality in the workplace?**

*Online Alternative Describe the difference between explicit and nonexplicit statements of moral reasoning. Locate an example of an explicit as well as a nonexplicit expression related to workplace ethics.*

1. **Lecture Point: The efficacy of business ethics**

**Questions to Ask Students: Should ethics or a sense of moral reasoning be a component of business operations? Discuss the support and criticisms of connecting morality with the business world.**

*Online Alternative: Should ethics or a sense of moral reasoning be a component of business operations? Locate an article or op-ed piece either in support of or opposition to mixing business with morality.*

1. **Lecture Point: Moral responsibility for wrongful actions**

**Questions to Ask Students: The moral responsibility an individual bears for harmful or injurious actions depends primarily upon three factors. Describe a time in which your actions negatively impacted someone else, and apply these three factors to determine whether or not your actions would result in moral responsibility.**

*Online Alternative The moral responsibility an individual bears for harmful or injurious actions depends primarily upon three factors. Use Internet research to locate two specific examples of an individual’s actions causing harm to another person. In example one, source a scenario in which the individual is not found morally responsible for the harm or injury he or she causes. In example two, source a scenario in which the individual is found morally responsible for causing harm or injury.*